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LAFAYETTE VISTAS

City Faces $29 Million Road Deficit

Council Receives Engineer's Report on Roads

Plans to Take Issue to Public this November

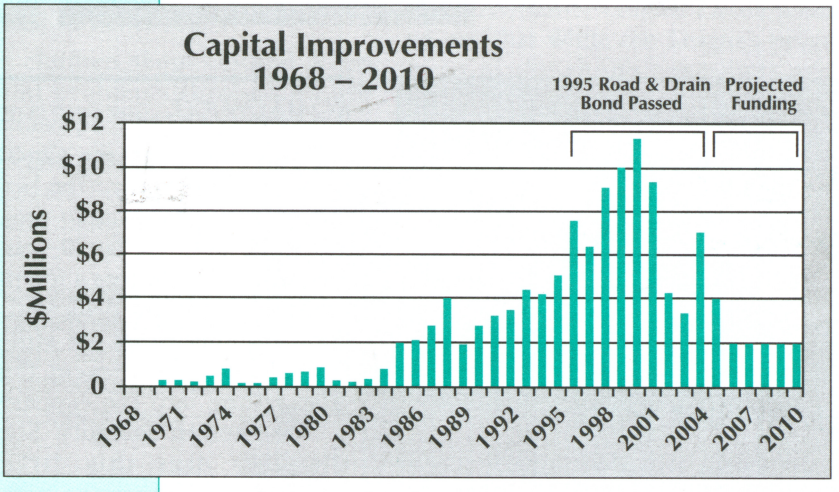
On February 9, the City Council received a report from the City Engineer regarding the condition of Lafayette's roads and the critical need for repairs on many residential streets. (See adjacent story.) Although the Council was already aware of the projected $29 million deficit, they recognized that it is now imperative for the City to seek new revenue sources.

For the last five years, the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) has averaged about $5 million per year. Funds for the CIP came from four primary sources: 1) the 1995 Road and Drain Bond, 2) federal and state grants, 3) our share of gasoline and Measure C sales taxes, and 4) $1 million annually from the General Fund. However, because the 1995 Road and Drain Bond money has been spent and receiving additional state and federal grants is highly unlikely due to the state's budget problems, the future funds available for CIP projects will only be about $2 million annually.

Obviously there is a huge gap between available and needed funds, and it is getting wider. In order to solve this problem, the Council directed the volunteer Capital Projects Funding Committee (CPFC), which is made up of Lafayette citizens, to review all possible options for identifying new funding sources. Based on the recommendations of the CPFC, the Council intends to develop a funding plan and place the issue on the November 2004 ballot. The next issue of Vistas will discuss the committee's recommendations in more detail.

Thirty six years ago, in 1968, you could buy a home in Lafayette for under $100,000, gas was only 34 cents a gallon, and the City of Lafayette became officially incorporated. Since many of the City's residential streets were relatively new at that time, it's also been at least that long, and probably longer, since most of those streets have been repaved.

This backlog of deferred maintenance now carries an estimated price tag of $42 million — an amount equal to 6 times the City's annual General Fund expenditures.



Unfortunately, the City expects to have only about $20 million in revenue over the next 10 years that can be committed to road repair. The resulting $22 million deficit, which will escalate to $29 million over 10 years, means residential roads in Lafayette are going to get a lot worse unless the City can find additional funding.

In the first of a 3-part series, this article examines the history of repairs to Lafayette's roads and drains and outlines the problems that still exist. The next two issues of Vistas will discuss the City's process for finding a solution and finally, describe a proposal to solve the problem.

In 1995, recognizing that things were falling apart faster than we were fixing them, Lafayette voters approved a Road & Drain bond that specified 41 projects at a cost of $13 million. These projects focused primarily on rebuilding the storm drain system to prevent flooding and fixing major streets, such as Deer Hill Road and St. Mary's Road, which serve the greatest number of motorists. All of these projects are now complete and the bond money has been spent. The limited funding allowed us to repair our major roads but left almost all of the smaller residential streets located throughout Lafayette untouched.

The City has historically dedicated as much money as it can to road maintenance, averaging about $1.2 million for the last 10 years, equivalent to 20% of the total General Fund expenditures. Unfortunately, this is a drop in the bucket given the size of the problem.

Evaluating Streets

The City uses a Pavement Management Program (PMP) to schedule and prioritize street maintenance, and also to project future costs. Each of Lafayette's 600 streets is categorized as either arterial, collector or residential based on function and traffic volume and is assigned a pavement condition index (PCI) ranging in value from 0 (worst) to 100 (best). The City's arterials are now in excellent condition with an average PCI of 82. The residential streets, however, have an average PCI of 46. In fact, 100 of the worst streets have PCI ratings of less than 25, indicating a "totally failed" condition. (For the morbidly curious, the worst street in town is Read Dr. with a PCI of 0.) **For every dollar spent maintaining good pavement, it is necessary to spend up to $5 to rehabilitate lower quality pavement, and more than $10 to reconstruct failed pavement.**

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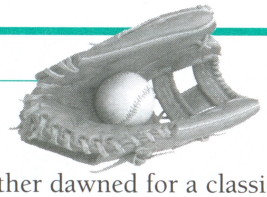
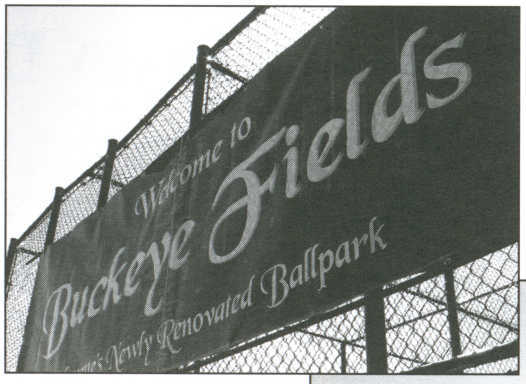
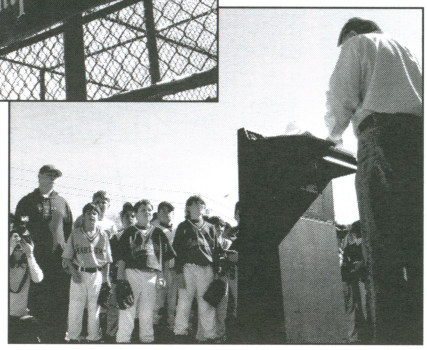


PLAY BALL!

Perfect weather dawned for a classic home-town celebration at the grand opening of Buckeye Fields (at 711 St. Mary's Road) on March 6th. While trumpets played, flags waved, and families smiled, kids in baseball uniforms munched free hot-dogs, generously donated by Diablo Foods and Trader Joe's, under a red, white and blue balloon arch.



The Mayor gathered a crowd of over 350 people to announce the winner of the Name the Park Contest and Ruth Kaiser Barrere was congratulated for her "Buckeye Fields" entry. Ruth then handed baby Buckeye trees to our Senator and Assemblywoman to thank them for successfully shepherding the state grant request of $1,030,000 that was used to renovate the field. Lafayette Little League President Mike Zampa also received a tree in recognition of all the Little League families who raised an additional $120,000 for extra amenities, such as bleachers and scoreboards, that make the park a first-rate facility.



The Mayor also praised the Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission, Lafayette Little League, City staff — especially Farzaneh Sanders who managed the large construction project during a particularly rainy winter — and Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary for their work in rehabilitating the meeting room that overlooks the new fields. Mike Zampa then handed out commemorative sweatshirts to all the people who helped make the "field of dreams" a reality.

When the formal ceremony was concluded, eager children raced out onto the newly mown emerald green turf to play a variety of games, including a fast pitch contest that utilized a police radar gun to measure speeds. If success can be gauged by the number of smiles that day, Buckeye Fields is an instant hit.

The Voting Results:

• Buckeye Fields	238 (33%)
• Saclan Fields	189 (26%)
• Oak Hill Park	109 (15%)
• Topsy Fields	104 (14%)
• St. Mary's Rd. Park	90 (12%)
TOTAL VOTES:	730

Council Adopts Goals for 2004-2005

If indeed it is true that the future is now, the Lafayette City Council is ready, having drafted their Workplan and Goals for 2004-2005. The plan, which was adopted by the Council in February for the fiscal year starting July 1st, looks both forward and backward...finishing past projects and starting new ones.

Workplan and Goals for 2004-2005:

- Refund outstanding bonds and issue remaining bonds available under the 1995 Road & Drain Bond debt ceiling.
- Place a new road and drain funding measure on the November ballot for consideration by Lafayette voters.
- Implement housing element programs that increase the supply of senior and affordable housing.
- Complete the approved 2004 Planning Department workplan.
- Complete construction of the new Veteran's Memorial Building.
- Complete design development drawings and commence work on final construction documents for the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center.
- Evaluate the existing Lafayette Library building to determine its best use after the library is relocated.
- Adopt a new 5-year implementation plan for the Redevelopment Project Area.
- Recruit, hire and train a new Police Chief.
- Consider establishment of an Arts Commission.

ROAD DEFICIT....Continued from front page

Therefore, given the City's limited financial resources, and in order to maximize the benefit for the most motorists, the City's current focus is to protect the substantial investment it has made over the last 9 years by making maintenance of the arterials and collectors a top priority. Where possible, remaining available funds are dedicated to repairing roads that are still in fair condition to prevent them from falling into the expensive reconstruction category. Since the City uses this "triage method" to determine street repair schedules, many streets with the worst ratings have *lower* priority than others with higher ratings precisely because they are already so expensive to fix.

This answers the question we most often hear: *Why is the City working on Moraga Road (for example) which is in pretty good shape, when my little cul-de-sac is falling apart?* While the City may have sufficient resources to maintain our newly improved streets, and perhaps improve a few marginal roads, there is simply not enough money to deal with the enormous cost of rehabilitating all the bad streets in Lafayette.

The City Council has recently reviewed this issue and taken some initial steps towards filling this vast financial pothole. (See sidebar on page 1.)

RETAIL THERAPY

Lafayette Thrift Shop Funds Countywide Philanthropy

Betty Brandt enjoys the vintage clothing found at the Way Side Inn.

"A bargain hunter's paradise" is how one shopper describes the **Way Side Inn Thrift Shop and Costume Rental** in downtown Lafayette. And, as if you needed another good reason to shop, the store not only offers fantastic buys for savvy customers, it has also been the main fund-raiser for the local chapter of the National Assistance League for over 30 years.

With over 460 volunteers, the Assistance League of Diablo Valley, a nonprofit service organization, provides an array of important social programs for adults and children in Contra Costa County. Focusing on projects that directly benefit those in need, the League has made a difference in thousands of lives during last year alone.

- **Operation School Bell®** provided new clothes, hygiene kits and backpacks for 1,500 children in 36 schools.
- **Kids On The Block** taught children about cultural differences, disabilities, and social problems through award-winning educational puppet shows performed in grades 1-4.
- **Preschool Vision Screening** screened approximately 1,300 children for vision problems in Walnut Creek and Lafayette day care centers and preschools.
- **TeleCare** brought reassurance and friendship to thousands of seniors and homebound adults through phone calls from League members. In addition, TeleCare clients received cards and greetings from members of **Assisteens**, a teenage auxiliary of the League.
- **Welcome Home Layettes** were given to first time mothers whose babies were determined to be at risk by the County Social Services Department. Assistance League members purchased supplies and assembled 500 layettes, including receiving blankets, sleepers, undershirts, towels, diapers and wipes.
- **R.E.A.D. (Read, Enrich, Achieve, Discover)** provided classroom volunteers to help instill and nourish a love of reading.

All of these programs are funded, in a large part, from sales at Lafayette's own Way Side Inn Thrift Shop and Costume Rental. The store is run entirely by volunteers in an historic building at 3521 Golden Gate Way, near the Park Theater. This charming building, one of the oldest in Lafayette, was built in 1894 as a saloon and rooming house. It later became a stage coach stop and then a series of stores. It was purchased by the Assistance League in the 1970s and has been operated as a Thrift Shop ever since. Don't miss the May 4–8 sale which will feature vintage hats, gloves and purses from the 30's, 40's, & 50's.

Fantastic Bargains for Discriminating Buyers

Linda Patton, Chairperson of the Way Side Inn.

Linda Patton, chairperson of the Way Side Inn shop, said, "Our store is well known by thrift shoppers from all over the Bay Area because of the quality of our merchandise." Gently used items, including designer label clothes, home decor, housewares, toys, and books are restocked weekly with new donations.

Consider: Over 80% of the proceeds from these sales go back into the community through the various programs of the Assistance League. Patton pointed out that while the League's programs benefit those in need, most of the shop's customers are simply people who like bargains. The League turns donations of used items into sales, and uses the proceeds to support their social programs. Linda emphasized, "None of the clothing we provide via Operation School Bell is second-hand...the children are getting new clothes and the mothers are getting new supplies."

Lions and Tigers and Bears...Oh My!

Costume Rentals at the Way Side Inn also raise money for League projects. They have over 500 complete costumes for adults...everything from animal costumes to famous people to historic costumes. In fact, if you need a costume for any occasion – they probably have it.

Last year, the Way Side Inn generated approximately $250,000 to fund important programs throughout Contra Costa County. Shopping at the Way Side is a great way to find a bargain and help out those in need.

Way Side Inn Thrift Shop and Costume Rental is open Tuesday through Friday 11:00 to 4:00, and Saturday 11:00 to 3:00. Donations are accepted during the same hours. If you have questions, call the shop at 284-4781. For more information on the Assistance League of Diablo Valley, call 934-0901 or visit **www.Assistance LeagueDV.org**.

Spotted Around Town

Looks as if some citizens have gotten creative with their Love Lafayette bumper stickers. Want a **Love Lafayette** bumper sticker of your own? Get one at the City Offices or Chamber of Commerce. Seen a funny one? Let us know at **cityhall@lovelafayette.org.** Here are a few that we've seen around town.

Celebrating the semi-rural nature of the City:

Love Leafyette

An ode to early mornings:

Love Latte

Honoring the French general with song:

La La Lafayette

STREET BEAT

On November 3rd, we took to the street (Mt. Diablo Blvd. in front of Starbucks) to ask Lafayette residents: ***What do you like best about Lafayette? What do you think needs improvement?***

Erika Maslan:

Best: I like the way it has grown but it still has a small town flavor. I love some of the new restaurants.

Needs Improvement: The green light for pedestrians across Mt. Diablo (at Moraga Road) needs to be longer. I worry about older people making it across.

Julie Tobias-Pancoast with son Ely:

Best: Its access to San Francisco and its natural beauty – the mixture of hills and flat land.

Needs Improvement: Mt. Diablo Blvd. needs a pedestrian walkway so we can safely walk along the length of it to the reservoir and other places.

Mark Vale:

Best: The easy access to things. It is pretty self-contained.

Needs Improvement: I wish there were more restaurants of a wider variety.

Paul McDonagh: *(no photo)*

Best: How small it is, particularly the small downtown, and how safe it is.

Needs Improvement: We need dots on the road at the south end of Pleasant Hill Rd. to alert people and prevent them from running into the gate at the end of the street.

AROUND TOWN

Town Hall Theatre **Box Office: 283-1557 or www.thtc.org • Info: 283-3728 or www.gcplayers.org** • Tickets now available at The Lafayette Bookstore.

5/20–6/20: LET'S GO TO THE MOVIES – A musical revue showcasing family favorite songs from the movies. The combination of hot buttered popcorn from the lobby and the toe tapping melodies promises to be a picture perfect conclusion to the 2003-2004 season.

May 15 **LAFAYETTE JUNIORS 4TH ANNUAL KITCHEN TOUR –** 10:00 am–3:00 pm, $30 per person tour only; $40 per person includes a gourmet box lunch. Proceeds benefit Lafayette Parks & Recreation. Call 942-5636 for more info.

May 18 **A TASTE OF LAFAYETTE –** 6:00–9:00 pm, A tour of Lafayette's finest dining establishments and the opportunity to sample the signature cuisine of each restaurant. $45 per person. For more info, call the Lafayette Chamber at 284-7404.

CITY DIRECTORY

For Council Members call: **284-1968**

Council Members

Erling Horn	**Mayor**
Carl Anduri	**Vice Mayor**
Carol Federighi	**Council Member**
Ivor Samson	**Council Member**
Don Tatzin	**Council Member**

Messages to **all** Council Members:
cityhall@lovelafayette.org

Administration

General Reception and	**284-1968**
Steven Falk, City Manager	**Fax: 284-3169**
Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	**299-3227**
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	**299-3213**
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	**299-3210**

Community Development

Ann Merideth, Director	**299-3218**
Tony Coe, Engineering Srv. Mgr.	**284-1951**
Niroop Srivatsa, Planning Srv. Mgr.	**284-1976**
Ron Lefler, Public Works Srv. Mgr.	**299-3214**
P.W. Hotline (to report problems)	**299-3259**

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.

Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Shanks, Analyst	**299-3216**
	Or 299-3215

Parks, Trails and Recreation **284-2232**

Jennifer Russell, Director

Senior Services	**284-5050**
Teen Programs	**284-5815**

Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	**911**
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	**284-5010**
Police Business Office:	**283-3680**

Anonymous Tipline, Traffic Enforcement, Suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3232 X 2205

Fax	**284-3169**
Address	**3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210 Lafayette, CA 94549-1968**
Website:	**www.ci.lafayette.ca.us**

E-MAIL: Council/staff members can be reached via e-mail using this address format:
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Example: SFalk@lovelafayette.org

LAFAYETTE

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